

CATHOLIC THEATRE

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of
NATIONAL CATHOLIC THEATRE CONFERENCE

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President
Rev. Gabriel Stapleton, S.D.S.

Vice-President
Robert Smett

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. . . then we looked around and we were HOME!

by FATHER ANTHONY ZOGHBY

Founder-Director Mobile Theatre Guild



Ribbon cutting ceremony for the opening of the new theatre building of the Mobile Theatre Guild—the Honorable Henry Luscher, mayor of Mobile (left) and Major General Dan F. Callahan, commander of the Mobile Air Materiel Area, "and friends"

Seven years ago, we were an idea—a lot of enthusiasm and some talent—and our Guild was born. For five years we were predominantly a student guild and all of our shows were produced in high school auditoriums or the CYO hall.

People who were seniors in high school when we started were coming home from college or a tour of duty in the service. Young married couples were settling down and soon a lot of the "old gang" who were with us in our earliest days were ready to go on stage again. This is how the adult Community Theatre idea just seemed to happen naturally.

In two years as a Community Theatre we mushroomed to prominence as an important cultural and civic activity. As the Guild grew bigger and better, there was an increasing need for a place to call HOME. We did the *Caine Mutiny Court-martial* in the Municipal Courtroom, *Anastasia* in the Public Library, Convent of Mercy for *Mrs. McThing*, Bishop Toolen High School for *The Prisoner*, and the CYO hall for *The Crucible*. Last season was wonderful, but really "pillar to post" existing. We decided to try to finish the season in the CYO hall, but we were sharing with dances, bingo games, meetings, dog shows, basketball, volley-ball, etc., and it isn't a "great big modern Yankee gym—just a little ole Mission Diocese CYO hall," mostly a brick box!

Our Diocese covers almost 60,000 square miles and is between two to three per cent Catholic. But our Archbishop knew we were working for Catholic leadership in cultural and civic fields and so he encouraged us.

We were set to move into a little second hand furniture store for an ideal old-quarter, intimate theatre, but we couldn't settle with the building commission with their new and demanding high code standards. Every effort seemed thwarted.

(Continued on page five.)

COMMUNITY THEATRE EDITION

REPORT ON COMMITTEES

A number of committees are in process of formation. The following list, then, does not represent a complete listing.

Constitutional Revision Committee: The Committee listing was included in the mid-summer issue. The Committee was expanded in accord with the motion passed at the Kansas City Convention. Sister Susan, S.S.N.D. is chairman. Committee report due: June 1, 1958.

Convention Handbook Committee: Brother Dunstan, C.S.C., Chairman; Rev. Robert A. Johnston, S.J.; Anna Helen Reuter; Sister Mary Angelita, B.V.M.; Sister Mary Roberta, O.S.U.; Sister Agnes Virginia, S.C.L. Purpose: To evaluate past Convention procedures and to make recommendations to the Executive Board for the planning of future Conventions. Report due: January 1, 1958.

College Drama Club Handbook Committee: Sister M. Jeanette, O.S.B., Chairman; Mother M. Margaret, O.S.U.; Rev. Paul Perrotta, O.P.; Sister M. Leandra, O.S.F.; Donald Waters. This Committee may well be expanded, especially through volunteers from men's colleges. We sincerely hope that some of our readers will volunteer. Purpose: to prepare a handbook for drama clubs in colleges which do not offer a major or minor in drama; to provide sample constitutions, typical schedules of rehearsals and activities, helpful hints for the successful drama club, point systems in use for awards. Report due: June 1, 1958.

Community Theatre Handbook Committee: Rev. Anthony Zoghby, Chairman; Robert Smett. *Volunteers from the ranks of community theatre are needed for this Committee.* Please contact the Executive Office at once if you wish to participate. Purpose: to provide a handbook for community theatres containing sample constitutions; helpful hints for organization and activity; typical schedules of rehearsals and activities; sug-

gestions for financing; point systems in use for awards; and, in general, whatever may be of use for the conduct and growth of the Catholic community theatre movement. Report due: June 1, 1958.

Drama Teaching Aids Committee: Sister Mary Immaculata, O.S.B., Chairman; Sister Mary Pius, R.S.M., of Our Lady of Mercy High, Rochester, N. Y.; Sister Catherine Denis, O.P.; Mrs. L. G. Bujarski. Purpose: to prepare a resource bibliography on graded text books; audio-visual material; contributive organizations; trade publications. This bibliography will be notated to indicate the suitability of the material for secondary, college, and community theatre use. Bibliography due: February or March issue of CATHOLIC THEATRE.

High School Drama Club Committee: This Committee is in process of formation. Its purpose and scope will be similar to that of the College Drama Club Committee. *Volunteers please contact the Executive Office. This will be a most interesting and valuable project.*

Library Committee: Sister Mary Xavier, B.V.M., Chairman; Mrs. Christopher Wyatt; Rev. C. P. Crowley, C.S.B.; Sister Miriam, O.S.U.; Brother John O'Connor, S.D.B.; Sister Marguerite, R.S.M.; Sister Gregory, O.P. Purpose: to recommend library acquisitions; to review acquisitions for our publications; and to advertise new acquisitions to the members; to make recommendations to the Executive Board concerning the Conference library. The Chairman of this Committee interrogates Committee members monthly concerning recommendations for acquisitions, and requests its members to do reviews upon receipt of books. In the event of a large number of reviews or for other special reasons, the Chairman may request other Conference members to review books for our publications. A standing Committee. Reports due: November 1 and June 1 for Executive Board Meetings. (Sister Mary Ruth, Librarian, will make semi-annual reports on the use of the library.)

FAVORITE PLAYS FOR CATHOLIC THEATRE

by Mrs. Christopher Wyatt

MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL	----- Eliot
CHRISTOPH COLOMB	----- Claudel
CRADLE SONG	----- Sierra
THE FIRST LEGION	----- Lavery
POTTING SHED	----- Greene
SHADOW AND SUBSTANCE	----- Carroll
CITY OF KINGS	----- Nagle
LAST NIGHT OF DON JUAN	----- Rostand
NOAH	----- Obey
	Original
PRAISE OF FOLLY	----- Rover

SPECIAL REPORTS

A report on the organization and activities of the *Alpha Gamma Omega Fraternity* will be submitted by its Moderator, Rev. Robert A. Johnston, S.J., to the Executive Board in November. The information will be supplied to the membership through the pages of CATHOLIC THEATRE.

An indexing of the productions by members during 1956-1957 will be prepared by Mr. Joseph Cain from the files of *Catholic Theatre*. The type of presentation most frequently favored by the members on their respective levels. It will, in brief, be an analysis of Catholic Theatre in action. The purpose is to discover the trends in current Catholic theatre. What type of play does it favor, etc? Report due: As soon as feasible in the pages of CATHOLIC THEATRE.

From the President's Desk . . .

In an address to the students of Liceo Visconti, a Roman College, His Holiness said: "... a society in which esteem for culture declines is destined to lose its other goods as well." With this thought in mind I was very happy to be able to represent NCTC in the preliminary discussions for the formation of a Joint Council of the Fine Arts. The discussions were held in the President's suite at the recent Boston convention of the American Educational Theatre Association. In December we will meet again in New York in order to give firmer structure to the Council which is designed to counteract the scientific and technological over-emphasis in education by representing to the federal government the need of supporting the fine arts as essential to the life of man.

Mindful of this admonition of the Holy Father, I am also delighted with this Community Theatre edition. Community theatre has a vital role to fill in the diffusion of a Catholic theatrical culture in the villages, towns and cities of our nation.

In achieving its task of creating an integrated Catholic culture as opposed to a secularistic culture, community theatre together with educational theatre, cannot be true to its mission if it is content to do bowdlerized Broadway, plays stripped of vulgarity and objectionable elements. It is true,

BROADWAY SHOWS

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Annie Get Your Gun, Auntie Mame, Carousel, Damn Yankees, Fanny, Four Poster, Guys & Dolls, Happy Hunting, Joan of Loraine, Kismet, Life with Father, Lute Song, Of Thee I Sing, Oklahoma, Paint Your Wagon, Plain & Fancy, Seventeen, Show Boat, Silk Stockings, South Pacific, The Bells Are Ringing, The Crucible, The King & I, The Lark, Where's Charley, Ziegfeld Follies, and thousands of others.

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of course, that we cannot expect Catholic theatre to be limited to religious drama—but the greatest shortcoming of Catholic Theatre is its failure to do more religious drama, drama which centers on the God-man relationship, more drama which is born of and radiates Faith. Secular critics may call religious drama "parochial;" but we must face the fact that our culture must necessarily be distinctive, flowing as it does from the wellsprings of that new life in Christ and that new illumination of all that is human and lovely and beautiful.

Protestant forces have been powerfully at work as is manifest by the "drama in the church" movement. During the past week alone I have come across four different articles on religious drama. It is true, of course, that the renaissance of Protestant interest in the religious drama is an effort on their part after some type of liturgy; but they are right, I feel, in their criticism of us as being timid about ecclesiocentric drama. We need a good deal more of Pauline boldness. God willing, Catholic community theatre will help us to carry the day.

We have been very busy at the executive office in processing about 6,000 letters during the month of September. Approximately 2,000 have been addressed to the members concerning affiliate membership and our theatrical goods procurement service. The balance of about 3,500 letters have been addressed to every Catholic institution which is not yet a member. All indications point to a year of tremendous activity. In the long run, you alone, dear members, will make it so. It is a privilege to serve so zealous a membership.

Devotedly in the Savior,

Father Gabriel, S.O.S.

President

And Another Thing . . .

Where are all those articles, production sheets, news items, how-to-do-it helps, book and play reviews, college papers that all you LOVELY PEOPLE so piously PROMISED to your CT BULLETIN editors at the Kansas City Convention??? Must those editors call you what the Good Book says folks are who promise and don't keep said promises? Remember that barrel we kept scratching the bottom of (Pardon! . . . of which we kept scratching the bottom) last year? Well, we have news for you, Chums! We're still scratchin'! The same barrell!!! And Mr. Postman, USA, didn't lose *all* those letters

Sure, nobody has time to write long articles. But everybody has time to write a short article. You write it; we'll doctor it up if it needs a little polishing. But YOU WRITE IT! TODAY! AND MAIL IT! Thanks a lot!

PREPARATION OF ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION IN CATHOLIC THEATRE

1. Articles preferably should be typed—DOUBLE SPACED. If articles are submitted in manuscript, please check legibility of the writing and adequate spacing between lines.
2. Wide margins are to be left top, bottom, left sides—2 inches; right side—1 inch.
3. Articles preferably should be *titled* by the writer.
4. Careful proofreading should be done by the writer before submitting the article. However, if it is necessary to make several corrections, it would be better to re-type the article.
5. Articles containing direct quotations from other sources must be properly documented.
6. Pages should each carry the title and page number.
7. Writers of articles, PLEASE:
Submit with your article a brief editorial biog. of yourself.
Include your name, affiliation, noteworthy contributions to theatre.
If you don't make yourself sound interesting to your readers, your editors certainly won't be able to do it for you.
If you are affiliated with an NCTC group, your 'fame' in print indirectly reflects some glory to your group.
Don't cheat them out of the glimmer!
8. Deadlines are always the first of the month previous to publication. March 1 for publication in April, etc. If an article will be only a day or two late for deadline please just send a card to say that the article is on the way and approximately when we can expect it.
9. What makes good copy for CATHOLIC THEATRE?
Provocative viewpoints on contemporary theatre.
Reviews of current publications in theatre.
How-to-do-it articles.
Production sheets of plays.
Evaluations of the work of playwrights.
College research papers that do not become too technical.
Discussions of radio and TV techniques.
Articles on directing and acting; new approaches to old plays.
More good articles on arena staging.
Anybody doing anything exciting in choric pageantry, etc.?
Any new scripts wandering around looking for someone to try them?

New Play

Tekakwitha, the Maid of the Mohawks by Mary-Eunice Sayrahder, 3 acts, 2 simple sets, 10 female, 9 male, 3 children. Contact Rev. Thomas J. Coffey, S.J., Tekakwitha League, 30 West 16th St., New York City.

When ordering from our advertisers, be sure to mention Catholic Theatre Conference.

EXCERPTS . . .

Pulling out all the stops to open a fine new community theatre building last night, the Mobile Theatre Guild treated its first sold-out crowd to a thoroughly hilarious two and a quarter hours of modern comedy.

Harry Kurnitz's enormously funny "Reclining Figure," which has three more nights to run, is a first-rate community theatre production with a cast particularly strong in the leading roles, a brilliant set and fullest attention paid to all details.

The crowd roared its approval at the final curtain.

—The Mobile Press
Sept. 5, 1957

The Mobile Theatre Guild had a gala opening of a new season and a new playhouse last night, with all the trimmings from the mayor to a shiny silver coffee service, but best of all it unwrapped a happy, modern comedy, done so that it barely missed being one big laugh.

A sold-out house had itself a wonderful time with the fast-talking wit of Harry Kurnitz' "Reclining Figure" and literally roared its approval at the final curtain.

By and large, all the spotlights, floodlights, congratulatory pictures and telegrams, and the ceremony attendant on the Guild's putting its first play into the comfortable new theatre building were not over-billing for what went on the stage.

—John Fay
The Mobile Register
Sept. 5, 1957

NEW

ST. GENESIUS PRAYER CARDS

The cards are done in two colors on an attractive white stock and contain a sketch of the Saint by Sister M. Paulita, B.V.M.

LARGE SIZE (11 x 6 1/4 inches)—These contain sketch and prayer on one side and are handsome when framed for your office, room, or backstage. \$1.00 per (50¢ each in quantities of 20 or more)

SMALL SIZE (7 x 2 1/4 inches)—These have the sketch on one side and the prayer on the reverse side. A reminder for your desk or prayerbook. Place them in the hands of all your members.

15¢ each (10¢ each in lots of 20 or more)

First copies of these have been sent gratis to the members. The prayer on the cards has the imprimatur of Cardinal Stritch. The imprimatur was accidentally omitted from the gratis copies sent to members but will appear on all other cards ordered.



Scene from Mobile Theatre Guild's opening success,
"Reclining Figure"

. . . then we looked around

(Continued from page one.)

We were very discouraged until the Archbishop came to our aid. He gave us a small corner of a high school yard and had a friend erect a little fireproof building for us (100 by 30 feet). The Archbishop left it to us to furnish and equip the building and provide heat. It wasn't easy, but with this big boost, everything seemed possible!

Soon, everyone seemed to take interest in us and the whole city began to rally. We closed last season with a promise of a new little theatre and big things to come. We opened the season on Sept. 4th in the new theatre and the big things HAVE COME! Like a miracle! Deo Gratias. We dreamed, and hoped, and thought and planned, and suddenly HERE IT IS!

The completion of our little theatre building and the opening of the first show make us feel—"mission accomplished," even though we still have a debt to work off and improvements to make. Every year, we hope to have at least one religious play and one classic on the schedule. This year,

the religious play will be *The Little World of Don Camillo* (plus *Song of Bernadette* on the centenary day), with *Antigone* as our classic. We have hopes, too, of doing a Passion Play and a Shakespeare once a year.

Our new theatre building is of concrete construction, brick and steel and a hundred per cent fireproof, built with "standard sizes of everything," for the sake of economy. We procured second-hand movie seats from New Orleans and inside partitions of sheet-rock wall board were kept to a bare minimum. The interior is unpainted and unfinished. The floor is plain cement and the walls are cement block and old brick. Year to year, we will furnish it by degrees. Our stage area is 30 x 30 feet but we cut our dressing room space into it. There are 14 rows of 14 seats each or a total capacity of 196. It was a struggle, but we managed to meet all the building code's highest requirements.

We think our new theatre is beautiful. At least, we know we're happy to have walls around us and a roof over our heads—all our own. We're HOME!



In dressing room of new theatre, veteran actress Dolly Deroux-Dauphin assists ingenue Frances Morris with her makeup.

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Excerpts from

Broadway Horizons: New and Old

by EMMET LAVERY

"When we first met twenty years ago in Loyola Community Theatre in Chicago, we thought we were discovering something new and wonderful in theatre: the theatre of the Spirit.

"The truth of the matter is we were re-discovering something that had been around for a long time. It was old when Roswitha was writing plays, when the Jesuits were building a tradition in the theatre all their own.

"Ours is the theatre of creation. It was new in the moment when God first created Man and when—for the first time—Man chose to create something in the image of God.

"You may remember a wonderful moment a few months ago when Edward R. Murrow was interviewing Soibhan McKenna on the television program *Person to Person*. "We in Ireland know what life is about," Miss McKenna said to Mr. Murrow.

"With all due regard for Miss McKenna, I think that we might repeat the statement. We, too, know what life is about and that is why we are gathered here today on the occasion of our twentieth birthday. . . .

"We are here today to take inventory of the theatre: the theatre of Broadway and the theatre beyond Broadway, the theatre in this country and the theatre abroad. And, as we look at the professional theatre today, we realize once more that it does not change very much, in outer form perhaps but not in basic content. Now, as so often before, it reflects the contemporary dreams, irritations and frustrations. Also the confusions of our time.

"A few years ago at a Catholic Theatre Conference meeting at Fordham, this point was well analyzed by the late Richard Dana Skinner, one time drama editor of *The Commonweal*, long a friend of Eugene O'Neill. Mr. Skinner suggested that one of the basic difficulties in American theatre was the fact that American audiences did not hold the same

basic (cultural) values in common. The very variety and diversity of American life worked against the unifying response which a play needs from an audience.

"Or, as Elmer Rice more recently pointed out, the theatre has been fractioned off just as life has been fractioned. The atom is not the only force that has been split in our time: Man has been split also. He is a complex and a divided personality.

"In spite of all these divisions and re-divisions of the American audience, there is always room for a play dealing with the spiritual hopes of man—providing the play is a good play. Deep down in human nature there is an underlying curiosity about the fundamental questions. . . .



"During the past season, two of the outstanding plays in New York were O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey Into Night* and Graham Greene's *The Potting Shed*. The O'Neill play won the Pulitzer Prize and the Critics' Award and yet, in my opinion, it is not so important a play as *The Potting Shed*. The O'Neill play is a long hymn of unforgiveness, from a son to his father, with little hope and little compassion. *The Potting Shed*, with a casual

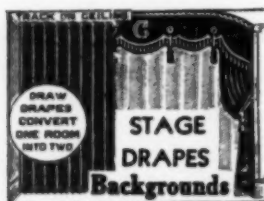
style worthy of Alfred Hitchcock, gives us a morality play in modern dress—yet we are hardly aware of the significance of the play until we are well into the second act. I think it deserved the prize as the best foreign play of the year, which went instead to Anouilh's amusing but not too significant play *The Waltz of the Toreadors*. . . .

"Strangely enough, an extraordinary perspective on the foibles of Man in the Age of Fission was provided in the farce comedy *Visit to a Small Planet*. Here a point was made in comedy that is often lost in tragedy. Man may be a foolish creature but he is not a static one: it is possible for him to change, for the worse, or for the better. And so when the dashing Visitor says in wistful farewell, 'Good-bye, you wonderfully imperfect people,' you feel that the imperfection is not permanent. Something might still happen to the human race, even for the better. . . .

"The theatre is like a lost child who is working his way back to a language once held in common, now long forgotten. We have the language in common and some of the techniques. The theatre on Broadway, on all too many occasions, has only the techniques in common. . . .

"We have been and we still are a great bridge between the Broadway theatre and the theatre beyond Broadway. We are happy when our school and college graduates move on

(Continued on page eleven.)



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by Vern Adix

Foreword by ARNOLD GILLETTE

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350 photographs

40 photographs

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Teen Theatre Special Feature:

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When? June, 1958.

Who? All NCTC High School Production Groups.

How? Simply submit to your Teen Theatre Editors, photographs of makeup jobs actually used in one of your productions. Keep the photos coming in from month to month because EACH MONTH—beginning with the November issue—the *Makeup Photo of-the-month* will be printed in CATHOLIC THEATRE MONTHLY. From the PIC-of-the-month series, one will be selected in June for the Grand Prize. A school may submit more than one photo at a time and more than once during the year. ACCOMPANYING THE PIC must be a brief description of the makeup used and how it was applied.

Why for? NCTC and Mr. Cohen are equally eager to offer practical helps and hints of immediate value to you in the art of stage makeup.

P.S. Contestants need not use Paramount Products, but

they must be regular members of NCTC. Be sure that PIX and accompanying description are completely identified—Name of play, author, publishing company, name of character, name and address of production group, date of production, name of makeup artist. Return postage must be included if contestants wish the photos returned to them.

So what? High School Producing Groups, get going on this! Here is our big chance for a year-long, exciting series of makeup photos with the pot of gold at the end! Eager beavers in teen age organizations, volunteer to handle this project for your group. Address all photos and correspondence to:

Sister Mary Honora, O.P.
St. John High School
Little Chute, Wisconsin

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NEWS NOTES

Congratulations, Chicago Drama Festival!!!!

Chicago Educational Television Association (CETA) has admitted to its rather exclusive membership NCTC's Chicago Drama Festival. To be accepted by CETA the prospective member must be recognized by the Association as an institute of high educational and cultural standing. Chicago's TV Channel 11 is CETA's spot on the dial. Tap it for NCTC appearances.

* * *

St. John's High School, Little Chute, launches its Players in a yearful of activities as NCTC-ers. The schedule includes participation in the State Drama Competitions; an all-student show in early November; one laboratory production a month in Children's Theatre (St. John's own a grade school, too!) for the small fry; a Christmas show; SONG OF BERNADETTE for February—and after that, it's anybody's guess! Sister Honora directs the group and is presently walking "on her ears" keeping out of the way of the Football schedule, which is quite a feat when one considers that the "Beef" has joined Players *en masse*! In-between-times, the group is readying a Program Bureau to be available to the various organizations in the Fox River Valley for luncheon and meeting programs.

* * *

Sister Mary Hildegard, R.S.M. Chairman of the Department of Drama at Our Lady of Cincinnati College, Cincinnati, has planned three events before the current semester terminates. On October 1 Sister presented Scenes from two comedies of Shakespeare, MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING and TAMING OF THE SHREW. On November 17, the first major production of the season will be offered. EMMA by John Hallauer, a three act drama adapted from the novel, EMMA by Jane Austen, will be presented. An Advent Liturgical Pageant (original), LET THERE BE LIGHT, will be staged on December 4.

* * *

Music Theatre of Rochester will present the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, CAROUSEL, as their New Year's presentation in the Auditorium Theatre, it was announced by Miss Suzanne Wigg, music director.

ELIOT SYMPOSIUM

A symposium on poet-playwright T. S. Eliot was presented on Saturday, September 21 in the Nazareth College Auditorium, Rochester, New York.

First in a series of annual Great Playwrights Symposiums, the program is sponsored by the Nazareth College Literary Forum and the National Catholic Theatre Conference.

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WAITING'S NOT FOR ME. By Norman Matson. An endearing comedy adapted by the author from his Saturday Evening Post story, "The Lunatic from Boston." The hero is a "lunatic" precisely because he's not afraid to work, and doesn't wait for some governmental agency to solve his problems. 8 men, 4 women. Very suitable for schools as well as adult groups. 1 set.

THE SHOEMAKER'S CHILDREN. By Phoebe and Henry Ephron, who wrote screen plays for "The Desk Set," "Carousel" and other movies. Clean, wholesome, urbane comedy about a great statesman's widow and her stratagems to keep her grown children from ruining their lives and disgracing their father's name. 7 men, 6 women. 1 set.

THE SQUARE NEEDLE. By Samuel W. Taylor. A fast and funny farce-comedy about a group of soldiers and a WAC, forgotten by the Army and left in London for months after the end of World War II, desperately trying to wangle their way back home. 15 men, 2 women.



Community Corner

By FATHER ANTHONY ZOGHBY

CATHOLIC THEATRE GUILD OF INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA—will open their 1957-1958 season with the comedy favorite, CHARLEY'S AUNT. Also scheduled are Emmet Lavery's MURDER IN A NUNNERY, William's THE GLASS MENAGERIE, ending the season with the musical, PLAIN AND FANCY.

CATHOLIC THEATRE GUILD OF LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY—finished a special SUMMER SHOWCASE on August 23. Opening the regular season with Walter Kerr's STAR DUST under the direction of Carol Bueker. This will be followed by Joudrey's TEACH ME HOW TO CRY. Al Bonner will direct. Next, Theophane Lee's BAMBOO CROSS, under the direction of Tom Lennon. Season will close with ARSENIC AND OLD LACE, with Janet Barkmeyer as director.

CATHOLIC THEATRE OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK—opened the season with the Hellman version of Anouilh's THE LARK, followed by Fry's THE LADY'S NOT FOR BURNING, and ending the season with THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK. Wilford Scott will direct all productions.

THE MOBILE THEATRE GUILD, INC., MOBILE, ALABAMA—began the current season with Harry Kurnitz' RECLINING FIGURE on September 4, 5, and 6. This will be followed by THE BAT on Nov. 6, 7, and 8. The great Greek drama of power, ANTIGONE, will take the stage early in January, to be followed by JANE EYRE in March and THE LITTLE WORLD OF DON CAMILLO in May.

Board Meeting

At the invitation of the President of Immaculata College, Immaculata, Pa., the Executive Board will hold its winter meeting at Immaculata in conjunction with the Drama Clinic sponsored by Sister Donatus, I.H.M. on Nov. 8, 9, and 10. The Clinic promises to be one of the outstanding Catholic theatre events of the year. Sister Donatus has done an almost incredible task in bringing two-thirds of the Pennsylvania schools into the Conference. Without a doubt, she is one of our most loyal and ardent standard-bearers.

Regional and Unit Chairmen, the Editors, and the Chairmen of the various committees are cordially invited to attend the open sessions of the Executive Board. If you plan to attend, please notify Sister Donatus well ahead of time. In the event that you cannot attend, please submit your report on activities accomplished and activities planned as well as your financial to the President by November 1.



Director Eugene Bergmann with cast of "7 Keys to Baldpate," St. Thomas More Theatre Guild's first play in 1953

Theatre Guild of St. Thomas More Parish

The Theatre Guild of St. Thomas More Parish in Decatur, Ga., announces its program for the entire '57-58 theatrical season.

Set for Nov. 22-23rd, "The Goose Hangs High," a 3-act comedy by Lewis Beech.

Following the holidays, and the Children's play, the Guild takes "Arsenic and Old Lace" "on the road" when it re-presents its recent hit at the College Park, Ga., Civic Auditorium under the sponsorship of the Public Relations Committee of St. John's of Hapeville on Jan. 31st and Feb. 1st, 1958.

"The Song of Bernadette" will be presented March 21st and 22nd. Adapted for dramatization by Jean and Walter Kerr from the novel by Franz Werfel, the 3-act play will be presented during the centennial anniversary. Both "The Goose Hangs High" and "The Song of Bernadette" will be staged in the round and presented at the St. Thomas More Social Hall in Decatur. All Guild productions are directed by Eugene Bergmann.

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MOPPET THEATRE



HOLIDAY PLAYS FOR LITTLE PLAYERS by Deborah Newman. A collection of royalty-free plays for children. Boston: Plays, Inc., 1957. \$4.00.

This is a worth-looking-at collection of 33 plays for the celebration of all the major holidays and such special occasions as Book Week, Arbor Day, Flag Day. All plays are simple to do; dialog is easy to learn; situations natural and believable.

However, rather than put prepared script into the hands of the pre-teens, this reviewer is inclined to suggest that the plays be used preferably:

- (1) By teenage acting groups doing the plays for the children;
- (2) By using the plays as creative dramatics material with the pre-teens, telling the story to the children, creating the characters, planning the scenes, improvising the dialog.
- (3) By reading the plays in the classroom (book-in-hand idea).

The collection is well worth consideration, and NCTC Directors might pass the information along to the elementary teachers and directors in the middle grades.

THIRTY PLAYS FOR CLASSROOM READING by Donald D. Durrell and B. Alice Crossley. Published by PLAYS, Inc., Boston. Trade edition \$3.75; Text edition, \$3.00.

Fresh from the press on August 8, 1957, is one of the most exciting books of the year, bringing to children of the middle grades thirty most enjoyable little plays arranged for book-in-hand reading by the youngsters. A narrator neatly handles the problem of the settings.

Primarily, the plays are presented as a new approach to the reading program in the Intermediate grades. Obviously the authors have a sound understanding both of reading needs and skills, and of creative play acting as "essentials" for children. In both the Introduction to the book and in the Suggestions to the Teacher, Mr. Durrell and Miss Crossley, Professor and Associate Professor, respectively, of Elementary Education, Boston University, put forth most succinctly the scope and objectives of the collection, together with the most practical directions for the use of the plays for classroom reading.

All plays have been tested and tried with over 500 children in the Boston schools and represent the children's choice of favorite plays. Vocabularies have been carefully screened to grade level. A set of five books is adequate for class needs.

Best feature of the book is the "readiness" help given the children at the beginning of each play. It is precisely this "creative dramatics" approach that makes the book a most valuable contribution to playmaking for and with children.

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Broadway Horizons

(Continued from page six.)

to professional eminence in the Broadway theatre. We are equally happy when guest stars from the theatre come to act with us in our college and community productions. Yet this is not the end. There is more to the theatre than mere technical perfection. . . .

"For us, the theatre is a great means to a great end and the end is the development, the enlargement, of human personality. For myself I say: 'Life before Art and Art for everyone.' And by this I mean: careerism for the few is not as important as participation for the many. In the era of the three day week, which may soon be upon us, it will be necessary to re-examine the whole field of the creative arts to see if self-recreation may possibly be the answer to some of the problems presented by the dilemma of unwanted and unexpected leisure time. . . .

"We may all see the day when theatre as an avocation is more important than theatre as a vocation—theatre as a social necessity for millions of people who will have more time on their hands than they know what to do with. . . .

"This is a problem that is of immediate concern to many psychiatrists. I don't think they see the answer as yet in terms of theatre, certainly not in terms of Catholic Theatre.

Unit Meeting for St. Louis Unit, Sept. 7

1. Set the unit play festival date for Thanksgiving weekend at Xavier High School.
2. Approved publishing a calendar listing the play dates of all member schools in the area to encourage members to attend each other's functions. Reapproved practice of admitting all members and affiliates to each other's plays (free) on presentation of NCTC membership card.
3. Planned a cooperative schedule of events for high school members for second semester in order to keep up interest after festival.
4. Approved rating festival plays as "superior," "excellent," "good," without selecting winners. All "superior" rated plays to be submitted to regional convention committee who will select the one play best suited for the regional program.
5. Approved giving financial assistance from unit funds to send three top actors and three top actresses to regional convention.
6. Reelected Sister Mary Jeanine, B.V.M., Xavier High School, 3733 W. Pine, St. Louis, Mo., as Unit Chairman for the St. Louis unit.

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What They're Reading . . .

The Community Theatre and How It Works by John Wray Young, Harper and Brothers, 1957, \$3.50, 166 pp.

Finally it has been put down in black and white! If you are like this reviewer, you will sigh, "Oh, Mr. Young, why didn't you write your book ten years ago or five—I could have avoided so many mistakes!"

With over twenty years experience in and dedication to community theatre, John Wray Young has written down on paper the "Hows," "Whys," "Don'ts" and "Dos."

If you are in community theatre yourself, have an idea about it in the back of your head or, simply, if you like theatre, you will find Mr. Young's new work the most readable and informative study of the subject yet to be put in print.

He traces the birth of community theatre in 1912, slapped into life by the new playwrights, its effect on Broadway, to which in turn it gave life, until the awesome statistic that "today the American community theatre involves a greater total number of participants than have ever worked in an art form, in any nation, in all history."

How to start a community theatre? People gather together who "want to do a play," the city's recreation department program, the young director who wants a theatre and can have one only by creating an organization. Constitutions, membership, dues, the "right" people, the others who belong to the minstrel show league ("I would not trade that extra bit of revenue for the privilege of scheduling *The Cocktail Party*, *Death of a Salesman*, or an original.")

Theatre versus television—" . . . but the Genii of the Tubes will not destroy theatre. They will be unable, like many other projections of science, to create life. This is the theatre's eternal secret, the creating of living emotional experiences by the living actor and the audience working together. Only in theatre is there mutual emotional experience. For 250 years man has found theatre a rewarding and satisfying experience. Call it Catharsis, soul-refreshment, what will you, the fact is a truth of civilization."

The author warns against the "four hundred" club, cast-

ing with the social register in one hand and the script in the other. (How well he knows that this will "touch home" to many!) Mr. Young tells us about his own Shreveport, Louisiana group and their methods of procedure—simple, efficient, democratic and artistic. He warns us against the dangers of precasting and the importance of second and third tryouts.

Authority and "know-how" in the board members—"It is wrong to 'reward' a good player or technician by election to the board." (Touch home again?)

And if you are planning or would like to plan "a theatre of your own," all kinds of suggestions and cautions, proven by experience are presented. For high school and college drama teachers too—"A hardwood floor is attractive in many locations but one of them is not on the stage." Footlights have some possible use in lighting the curtain before the play begins; otherwise none."

Mr. Young includes some sample theatre building budgets that will give you ideas on what to look for if your own plans become that advanced.

On the director—"In addition to personal and civic stature (the author is death on "Bohemianism"), the young director has to prove his excellence as a teacher. The teaching skill required in community theatre needs not only to be highly developed but to be used under the most difficult conditions. If community theatre workers do not enjoy their work they are not apt to return."

We are warned to avoid the would-be avant-garde, the self appointed advisers who think this or that play would be "so smart" to do. The author insists on integrity in theatre, the importance of good play selection and excellence in production. "Unless playgoing is an aesthetic experience, it is sensible to settle for television or radio and save the money."

The theatre will endure, says Mr. Young. Our problem is how we can speed the growth and quality of theatre in the United States. Answer—more capable, better-trained leadership. He records the various national and state organizations whose raison d'être is to satisfy this need and the wonderful work already being accomplished. He concludes that "the quality of community theatre will increase only at the rate at which it can find leadership with improved training and increased dedication."

Attractively printed and with a sensible, useable format, John Wray Young's *The Community Theatre and How It Works* will be read in one sitting and then placed on the shelf where it will be most accessible—you will use it for reference for many years to come.

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The LARK by C.T.R.

Although THE LARK did not become available for amateur production until early October, permission had already been granted to the Catholic Theatre of Rochester to present the play on October 12 and 13.

This is the second time the group has been privileged to present the first amateur performance of a Broadway play. Last year with special permission of the author, Gian-Carlo Menotti, Catholic Theatre produced THE SAINT OF BLEECKER STREET.

Director Wilford Scott and set designer Carl Zollo saw the Anouilh play, the story of St. Joan of Arc, two years ago in Paris and immediately on return began efforts to obtain the rights for presentation in Rochester.

Due to a number of technical and contract difficulties, negotiations for production could not be made until this fall.

NCTC PRODUCTION SHEETS

Duplicates of those which have appeared in *Catholic Theatre*. Production sheets are available for the following titles:

THE BABY CYCLONE
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A NEW LOOK

The new look in Conference stationery is the handiwork of Sister M. Marguerite, R.S.M., who graciously obtained the services of the professional artist who designed our Dinneen Award. Sister also guided the printing of the beautiful new prayer cards of St. Genesius. The attractive promotion leaflets and the high school affiliate leaflet were the handiwork of Sister Charitas, C.S.J., assisted by Fr. Gabriel and Robert Smett.

CENSORSHIP: MANY THINGS TO MANY MEN

- - AN EDITORIAL

There seems to be some sort of battle between censorship and art, there seems to be a lack of knowledge of what constitutes art, there seems to be a heresy extant that art and license are rightful playmates.

We will readily admit that our countrymen are lacking much in art education, but a great deal of the advancement, and there have been advances, has been due to the work of the Church.

FATHER BONN

In a lecture at Rochester's Nazareth College last Spring, Jesuit author Father John Louis Bonn stated that the position of Catholic art today is "pretty good." And he did not mean this in a disparaging way. Father Bonn reiterated the advancement of Catholic art on the stage, in architecture, in poetry and literature as a whole.

Twenty years ago, he said, the idea of a Catholic play running on Broadway would have been pious woolgathering. Today hardly a season passes without one or two Catholic plays opening in New York, most often to stay for successful runs.

Church architecture has left its gothic and romanesque stigma behind to advance into modern and simple lines, bespeaking their times. Catholic poetry and literature has shuffled off its insipid coil of puritanic Victorianism and has developed into a realistic and vibrant art. Works of a cloistered Trappist monk have stayed on best seller lists for months at a time.

In his recent encyclical, "Miranda Prorsus," in which he urges moral curbs on television, radio, and motion pictures, His Holiness Pope Pius XII writes: "There are, as you know, those who are moved by an inordinate desire for gain; or deceived by errors, they do not have a balanced view on human dignity and freedom; or finally, they give full acceptance to a false opinion about the real meaning of art."

Into this category defined by His Holiness fall America's "top" playwrights—Tennessee Williams, John Van Druten, F. Hugh Herbert—men with great talent and the misconception that art and sensationalism go hand in hand.

It is not difficult, and never has been, to find fault. Legion of Decency, Approved Play Lists, the National Association of Radio and TV Broadcasters are all beset with human foibles. But, paraphrasing a book title, POSITIVE ACTING might help us as we make our claim as protectors of art.

In the aforementioned encyclical, Pius XII states:

"The Church encourages and supports everything which truly concerns a fuller enrichment of the mind—for she is the patron and fostermother of human knowledge and the noble arts.

"Therefore she cannot permit the violation of these principles and laws which direct and govern man in his path to God, his final end."

This is censorship—saving men from hell and turning them to God—the Beautiful, the True, the Good.

QUOTE POPE PIUS

In an address on the occasion of the fifth centenary of Fra Angelico (April 20, 1955), Pope Pius told his listeners: "It is true that an explicitly moral or religious function is not demanded of art as art, but if artistic expression gives publicity to false, empty and confused forms, those not in harmony with the Creator's design; if, rather than lifting mind and heart to noble sentiments, it stirs the baser passions, it might perhaps find a welcome among some people, but only by nature of its novelty, a quality not always of value and with but slight content of that reality which is possessed by every type of human expression. But such an art would degrade itself, denying its primary and essential element; it would not be universal and perennial as is the human spirit to which it is addressed."

The first aim of the arts, says His Holiness, should be to serve truth and virtue.

But there will be conflicting judgments as long as there are people in art.

POSITIVE ACTING

What would happen if, for even a limited period of time, someone began to organize audiences instead of listings. What would happen if a few study groups, or perhaps the Catholic Theatre of Rochester, took time out to re-read the parable of the cockle and the wheat, and apply it to the field of film distribution, theatre, TV?

Suppose for one year, in one diocese or even one city, as playwright Emmet Lavery suggests, people began to support good entertainment and to ignore what they did not like? Suppose they went all out for the best and let the rest go? What then?

Maybe "censorship" would become an archaic word and an unnecessary activity.

For, as Pope Pius XI wrote (Vigilanti Cura, June 29, 1936): "We must ensure that all progress made, by God's favor, both in human knowledge and in technical skill, shall in practice so serve God's glory, the salvation of souls and the extension of Christ's kingdom, that we all, as the Church bids us pray, 'may so pass through temporal goods that we may not lose what is eternal.'"

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Your TEEN THEATRE Editor is:

Sister Mary Honora, O.P.
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If your Director has not already assigned a Corresponding Secretary for your group, will you please volunteer for the job immediately, and send your name just as immediately to your editor, together with a brief account of beginning activities for your group this new season.

Players Inc., Perform at Nazareth

Players Incorporated, international touring repertory company, presented William Shakespeare's ROMEO AND JULIET on Sunday, October 6, in Nazareth Academy Auditorium, Rochester.

David Rounds and Dolores Viola portray the lovers, Romeo and Juliet.

Miss Viola, a native of Detroit, is a graduate of Siena Heights College, Adrian, Michigan, and received her M.A. at Catholic University, Washington, D.C. She has done summer stock in Michigan and in Winooski Park, Vt.

At Catholic University, Miss Viola won considerable acclaim for her portrayals of Roxanne in CYRANO DE BERGERAC and Olivia in TWELFTH NIGHT.

PLAY REVIEW SHEETS

The Conference provides free copies of a play review sheet to its regular members who may be conducting a one-act play contest or play festival. The play review sheet is entitled: "Achievement in Play Production." Judges who have used it find it highly satisfactory in its criteria and point system.

TWENTY-WEEK THEATRE COURSE OFFERED BY CYO GROUP IN ROCHESTER

A new Theatre Advancement Course designed for members of the Junior Catholic Theatre of Rochester and sponsored by the CYO opened on October 7 at the Columbus Civic Center, according to Jack Burnett, director.

The twenty week course will cover all phases of theatre work including acting, directing, production, make-up, costumes and set design and history of theatre.

Miss Arloha McVinnie will conduct the classes with the following guest instructors: Miss Gloria Kilb, Carl Zollo, Larry Bates, Wilford Scott, Miss Callista Esterguard, and Miss Jean Strachan.

NEW UNIT

The Chicago metropolitan area will now be a separate Unit. Miss Anna Helen Reuter will be Unit Chairman.

A complete report on the Chairmen of the various Regions and Units will be printed in the next issue. Delays in correspondence have held up the imprinting of their names on the reverse side of our stationery. We are at work presently in obtaining chairmen for new Unit divisions. Not all who are approached are free to accept; and this has delayed the final tally of the Regional and Unit set-up.

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